

Federal Jobs Overseas



U.S. Civil Service Commission
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INTRODUCTION

United States citizens are employed by the Federal Government in Alaska, Hawaii, United States territories, and in foreign countries. They are found in almost every occupational field. They are construction and maintenance workers, doctors, nurses, teachers, technical experts, mining engineers, meteorologists, clerks, stenographers, typists, geologists, skilled tradesmen, social workers, agricultural marketing specialists, and agricultural and other economists.

Current needs of agencies with jobs to fill are generally limited to highly qualified and hard-to-find professional personnel, skilled technicians, and, in some cases, stenographers and clerical and administrative personnel. A few agencies are seeking experienced teachers, librarians, nurses, and medical personnel. However, a few vacancies occur in most fields from time to time because of normal turnover in personnel.

This pamphlet explains how jobs are filled, discusses conditions of employment, indicates the kinds of skills agencies use, and lists addresses to which inquiries may be sent.

HOW JOBS ARE FILLED

In Alaska, Hawaii, and United States territories, most vacancies are filled by the appointment of local eligibles who qualify in competitive civil-service examinations which are announced and held in the local area. Normally, there is a sufficient local labor market to fill the needs and examinations are not publicized outside the local areas. Some positions, however, may be filled by transferring career Government employees from the United States mainland.

When a vacancy is to be filled in a foreign country, determination is made whether to recruit from among persons in the area where the job is located or to seek qualified applicants residing in the United States. If the position is to be filled locally, the appointee may be a United States citizen residing or traveling in the area, the wife or dependent of a citizen employed or stationed in the area, or a foreign national.

In most instances where United States installations are established in foreign countries, either formal or informal agreements have been drawn

up assuring the host government that local nationals will be employed wherever possible in order to be of maximum assistance to the economy of that country. Furthermore, it is almost always to the economic advantage of the United States to employ foreign nationals at local pay rates without responsibility for travel costs and overseas cost-of-living allowances. Positions held by foreign nationals are in the excepted service and are not subject to the competitive requirements of the Civil Service Act and rules.

COMPETITIVE SERVICE POSITIONS

However, there are many thousands of technical, administrative, and supervisory positions in which United States citizens are employed in foreign countries. These positions are usually in the competitive service, and as vacancies occur they are filled in most cases by transferring career Government employees from the United States. This is the case in the Department of Defense, the largest employer of overseas personnel, and in most other agencies having overseas positions. When Government employees are not available for transfer overseas, and qualified United States citizens cannot be recruited locally, these vacancies are filled through the regular competitive examining process.

Approximately 30 examinations now open on a nationwide basis are being used, as recruiting needs require, to fill overseas positions. The examinations cover a variety of business and economics, engineering and scientific, medical, social and educational, and trades positions. Qualified persons interested in overseas assignments in these fields should establish eligibility under appropriate examinations. Applications and copies of examination announcements can be obtained from the Federal Job Information Center nearest you (See page 13).

EXCEPTED SERVICE POSITIONS

Some positions are excepted from the competitive requirements of the civil service rules and

regulations. Included in this group are positions in the Foreign Service of the Department of State, dependents' schools teachers, positions in the attache offices, and most positions of clerk-translator, translator, and interpreter. Applications for these positions should be made directly to the agency in which employment is desired.

A description of the principal agencies which employ personnel outside the United States, with the addresses to which inquiries or applications should be sent, begins on page 6 of this pamphlet.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Age

The minimum age for overseas appointments made in the United States is generally 21. In most cases, there is no maximum age limit.

Physical Requirements

Applicants for most overseas positions must be able to pass rigid physical examinations, since employees may be required to serve under extremely difficult living conditions and, in some areas, at posts where complete medical facilities are not available. Physical standards are applied which are suitable for the location and occupation involved, and may include standards of mental and emotional stability and maturity.

Any physical defect which would make the employee a hazard to himself or to others, or prevent efficient performance of the duties of the position, is disqualifying. Conditions which require periodic medical care, hospitalization, special foods or medicine may be disqualifying for some areas.

Accompanying dependents may also be required to pass rigid physical examinations.

Tour of Duty

Individuals selected in the United States for overseas employment generally are required to sign a transportation agreement for a definite period of service, which is usually for a minimum of 36 months. In certain areas the minimum period is 12 or 24 months.

Investigation

All appointments are subject to satisfactory security, character, and suitability investigations. Applicants considered for appointment are carefully screened, and only those possessing suitable qualifications are selected for overseas employment.

Since most Federal jobs overseas are filled by local residents or by the transfer of people who already work for the Government, opportunities for appointment to an overseas position are extremely limited.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Qualifications

Generally, the qualification requirements are the same as those established for like positions in the United States. Applicants may, however, be required to meet certain additional or higher standards. A foreign language capability, while not required in all, or even most, Federal jobs overseas, would obviously be a valuable qualification.

Dependents

For middle and upper-level positions in what may be broadly termed "professional occupations," most agencies permit employees to take their families with them. In certain other job categories, and in accordance with an established system of priorities, it is usually possible to arrange for dependents to follow from several months to a year after the employee has arrived at the overseas post.

For most clerical and secretarial positions abroad, agencies prefer single persons without dependents.

Appointments of both husband and wife are very infrequent, since there rarely are simultaneous vacancies in which their qualifications could be appropriately utilized at the same post. However, in foreign countries with a large American presence, both governmental and private-industrial, qualified U.S. citizens are sometimes needed for a

variety of job openings. In the majority of cases, dependents of U.S. Government employees overseas are given priority consideration for such employment.

Salary

Generally, overseas white-collar workers are paid the same base salaries as Federal employees in the United States occupying similar positions. In addition, where warranted by conditions at the post, they receive a post differential or cost-of-living allowance. In foreign areas, the wages of blue-collar workers are based upon continental United States rates plus, in some cases, a post differential or cost-of-living allowance; in United States areas overseas, their wages may be set in a similar way or they may be based on local rates.

Quarters Allowances

In foreign areas, employees are sometimes housed in Government quarters. If Government housing is not provided, a quarters allowance is paid which covers in large part the cost of rent and utilities. In most United States areas, Government quarters are not provided and no quarters allowance is paid.

Federal Employment Benefits

In general, Federal employees are entitled to such liberal benefits as paid vacations, sick leave with pay, and retirement coverage. They are eligible for life insurance and health benefits partially financed by the Government. Employees serving overseas also normally receive special benefits such as free travel for themselves and their dependents, free transportation or storage for their household goods, and additional paid vacations with free travel to their homes in the United States between tours of duty. Also, the United States Government operates dependents' schools in many areas and provides educational opportunities for children which are comparable to those offered in the better schools in the United States.

Veteran Preference

Veterans must be given consideration by appointing officers in the filling of overseas positions in accordance with the provisions of the Veterans' Preference Act.

AGENCIES EMPLOYING OVERSEAS PERSONNEL

This section indicates the kinds of positions for which these agencies may be recruiting and lists addresses to which inquiries about employment opportunities may be sent. (Persons who have never worked for the Government should also contact the Civil Service Commission for information about competitive examinations.)

The largest employers of overseas personnel include the Departments of State, Army, Navy, Air Force, Interior, Commerce, and Agriculture, the United States Information Agency, the Agency for International Development, and the Panama Canal Company—Canal Zone Government.

Department of Agriculture

The Foreign Agricultural Service assigns agricultural attaches and secretaries to staff its offices at foreign posts. These personnel analyze and report on production, trade and consumption of agricultural commodities and work to develop foreign markets for U.S. farm products. Professional positions normally are filled by Department of Agriculture employees trained in agricultural marketing and agricultural economics. Appointments are initially made from the Professional and Administrative Career Examination and examinations for Agricultural Economist and Agricultural Marketing Specialist. Secretarial positions are generally filled by transferring persons already employed by the Department of Agriculture; otherwise, vacancies are filled by appointment from the Civil Service Commission's list of eligibles in the clerk-stenographer examination, followed by a training program in Washington, D.C. Additional information may be obtained from the Personnel Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Department of the Air Force

The Air Force uses the Department of Defense Overseas Employment Program (OEP) as the primary source of candidates in filling its overseas positions. Although first consideration is given to

qualified employees currently serving at Air Force installations in the United States, employees of other Federal agencies are also considered if sufficient well-qualified candidates are not available within the Air Force. Government employees or former employees having reinstatement eligibility and interested in registering in the OEP should contact the Civilian Personnel Officer at the nearest Department of Defense installation. When well-qualified employees are not available through the OEP, vacancies are filled from the appropriate civil service register through the regular competitive examining process.

Department of the Army

Overseas positions are normally filled through the reassignment of Army career employees from the United States. Information about positions with the Department of the Army overseas, which require highly unusual or scarce skills, may be obtained from the Department of the Army, Civilian Management Field Agency, Attention PECM, Forrestal Building, Washington, D.C. 20314.

Department of the Navy

Vacancies are principally filled through the assignment of well-qualified Navy and Marine Corps career employees desiring to serve overseas. Primary recruitment sources are Department of the Navy career programs and the Department of Defense Overseas Employment Program (OEP). When recruitment from other sources is necessary, it is mainly for positions in engineering, science, skilled trades, accounting and auditing, and administration.

For information about appointment or assignment to overseas positions, see the Civilian Personnel Officer at the nearest Navy or Marine Corps installation.

Department of Defense

Employment opportunities are available for educators with the Department of Defense Overseas Dependents Schools.

The Department of Defense maintains a school system from kindergarten through grade 12 for the dependent children of military and civilian personnel stationed abroad. School year salaries for

educators are comparable to the average rates for similar positions in school systems in U.S. Districts having a population of 100,000 or more. Transportation and housing or a housing allowance are also provided. Qualification requirements include completion of a baccalaureate degree with a minimum of 18 semester hours in the field of professional teacher education and 2 years of actual teaching experience within the last 5 years. For information about teaching positions overseas, write to the Department of Defense, Office of Overseas Dependent Schools, Room 138, Architect Building, Arlington, Virginia 22209.

The Department of Defense also maintains a central registry of individuals interested in overseas employment. This program covers most positions for which overseas recruitment is conducted, by any branch of the Department of Defense. Individuals with Civil Service status should contact the civilian personnel office of the nearest Department of Defense installation for further information and registration in this program. Those without Civil Service status should apply under appropriate examinations, as indicated in this pamphlet.

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—Overseas positions are available for persons with meteorological or electronics backgrounds at weather stations maintained in Alaska, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Hawaii, Wake Island, Guam, Johnson Island, American Samoa, the Trust Territories, and Antarctica. Positions exist for persons with appropriate education or experience in geophysics at observatories located in Alaska, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and Guam. There are a few research positions available in the Antarctic for scientists with specialized experience or background in aeronomy, radio sciences and upper atmosphere-ionospheric physics. Qualified persons interested in any of these positions should address inquiries to the Personnel Officer, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Washington, D.C. 20852.

The United States Travel Service (USTS), is the national government tourist office of the United States. Its mission is to develop travel to the United States from foreign countries. It works with the travel industry: international agencies; city, State and foreign governments; and other Federal agencies to encourage and facilitate inbound passenger traffic.

Through its eight regional offices abroad, USTS provides information and assistance to the foreign travel trade segments which sell travel to the U.S. It carries out extensive publicity and advertising campaigns in foreign media to stimulate interest in U.S. travel destinations.

Positions exist for persons with appropriate international sales and promotional work experience in the field of travel and tourism. Academic background: Marketing, advertising, international economics, business administration, marketing research, and public relations and mass media communications. Positions abroad require fluency in language of country to which assigned.

Job locations abroad are London, England; Paris, France; Frankfurt, Germany; Mexico City, Mexico; Toronto, Canada; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Sydney, Australia; and Tokyo, Japan.

Send inquiries to:

Personnel Officer, Operations Division, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20230

Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration—Highway design, planning, construction, maintenance, and bridge engineers and specialists with experience in the administration and supervision of the operation and repair of highway construction equipment provide technical assistance to countries in connection with the Government's overseas technical aid program. Experienced persons interested in overseas employment should send inquiries to the Office of Personnel and Training, Federal Highway Administration, Washington, D.C. 20590.

Department of the Interior

Most of the positions are in Alaska. Almost all of these positions have been brought into the competitive service. Vacancies occur from time to time in engineering, metallurgy, geology, forestry, and teaching (elementary) positions. The jobs are usually filled through competitive examinations announced by the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Preference in appointment, however, is given to local residents. For more information about employment opportunities, address inquiries to the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Department of State

The Foreign Service of the United States, administered by the Department of State, recruits personnel for the career Foreign Service Officer Corps. Career Foreign Service Officers fill virtually all professional positions in the over 300 embassies and consulates maintained by the United States in more than 100 countries throughout the world. Officers serve primarily in one of the four functional specializations within the Department of State: Administration, consular affairs, economic/commercial, or political work. The Department of State is interested in personnel with training in diverse fields including political science, economics, public and business administration as well as experience in business, government and organizations involved in international activities. Appointments are made from among those who take competitive Foreign Service Officer examinations. Candidates for these examinations must be at least 21 years of age, except that candidates may apply at 20 years of age if they have a bachelor's degree or have completed successfully their junior year in college. Inquiries regarding these examinations should be addressed to the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520.

There is a continuing need for secretaries and communications and records assistants in the Foreign Service to staff the embassies and consulates throughout the world. Requests for information regarding opportunities and qualifications for employment in positions other than those filled through the competitive Foreign Service Officer examinations should be addressed to the Recruitment Branch, Employment Division, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520.

Agency for International Development

This Agency is the principal administrator of U.S. economic and technical assistance to the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

To administer these development programs, A.I.D. relies upon a staff of skilled, experienced men and women from a number of technical and professional disciplines. While employment opportunities vary from country to country and from time to time, the most frequent needs are for economists (MA required, Ph. D preferred), finan-

cial analysts, staff attorneys, auditors and accountants to work in Washington, D.C. and the Agency's overseas missions.

The majority of appointees join the A.I.D. staff in mid-level or senior-level positions, but the Agency also has intern positions for accountants, management auditors, economists and financial managers. These are open to young men and women who have majored in the relevant disciplines (and, preferably, have graduate degrees) but have not yet started their professional careers. Training is given in Washington and at overseas missions.

Most appointments are for 2-year tours overseas plus preliminary training and transportation time. Appropriate education and experience are the decisive criteria in the selection of candidates for both professional and intern positions. U.S. citizenship is a requirement.

Requests for information should be addressed to Chief, Recruitment Branch, Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C. 20523.

Panama Canal Company— Canal Zone Government

The efficient operation of the Panama Canal is of vital importance to world trade. Applications are accepted from qualified medical officers, registered nurses, medical technologists, teachers, mechanical and electrical engineers, ship pilots, machinists and electricians. Airmail SF-171 or inquiries to Deputy Personnel Director (Operations), Panama Canal Company, Box 2012, Balboa Heights, Canal Zone.

The Peace Corps (ACTION)

The Peace Corps provides opportunities for skilled Americans to serve in developing nations overseas. Its purpose is threefold: to give help where help is needed, to promote a better understanding of the American abroad, and to sharpen the American's image of other peoples.

Tours of duty are approximately 2 years, including several weeks of training received before overseas departure. Volunteers receive a living allowance to provide for food, housing, clothing and incidentals, and a readjustment allowance.

While most of the volunteers work in educational and community development programs, there are positions available in more than 300

separate skill areas. A college degree is not required. Beyond teaching and community development, demands are greatest for volunteers experienced in the fields of public health, agriculture, home economics, mechanics, construction, and social work.

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age and American citizens. Married couples are eligible if they have no dependents under 18. There is no upper age limit.

For further information on opportunities for service, and instructions for application, contact the ACTION office in your state or write the Office of Recruitment and Communications, Peace Corps, Washington, D.C. 20525.

United States Information Agency

Generally, all but a few specialized positions are filled from within the ranks of USIA's career Foreign Service. Entry into the Foreign Service Information Officer corps is open to individuals over 21 years of age under the Junior Officer Program. Candidates must participate in a competitive process involving both comprehensive written and oral examinations. Information about the next examination can be obtained from the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520.

As needed, the Agency may recruit experienced professionals for information and cultural work overseas. They are appointed as Foreign Service Limited Reserve Officers for a maximum of 5 years. They are eligible to apply for career status (FSIO) after 3 years in the Limited Reserve.

Candidates for the Foreign Service must have a knowledge of American foreign policy and international relations, and a solid background in the historical, political, economic and cultural development of the United States. They must possess an ability to communicate convincingly and tactfully, both orally and in writing. A good working command of a foreign language and an ability to learn foreign languages are useful. Candidates must be willing to serve in any country and at any post.

Opportunities for serving overseas also exist for secretaries. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age, be able to take shorthand at 80 words per minute, type at 50 words per minute, and have 3

years secretarial or stenographic experience or 2 years of business school or college.

For additional information, write to the Recruitment and Examining Division, United States Information Agency, 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20547. Standard Form 171 (Personal Qualifications Statement) should be submitted to this address when applying for a position with USIA (except for the Junior Officer Program; see above).

FEDERAL JOB INFORMATION CENTERS

The Civil Service Commission offers Federal employment information through a nationwide network of Federal Job Information Centers. A number for your area should be listed under "U.S. Government" in the white pages of most metropolitan phone directories. Or you can get the toll-free number of a Job Information Center in your State by dialing 800-555-1212.

A call can save you time and unnecessary effort if you want to obtain application forms, announcements and other general types of information.

For specific information on possible openings in overseas areas, you should write:

For Pacific areas:

Honolulu Area Office
U.S. Civil Service Commission
1000 Bishop Street, Suite 1500
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

For Atlantic area:

Washington Area Office
U.S. Civil Service Commission
1900 E Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20415

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